

IOW Bits and Bobs

Church Bands

It seems there were a number of church bands on the IOW. These used to play in a gallery opposite the altar. The congregation would turn round to face them and then sing. They also played for dances, festivals, weddings etc. They were good musicians, all able to read music, play various harmonies, create new tunes etc. They would be constantly practising so the village would be full of music. Sadly this all stopped when every church had to have an organ!

I cannot find the relevant passage regarding IOW Brading Band but I remember it consisted of violin, oboe, serpent and Cornet (Trumpet, keyed bugle) other bands had cello and piccolo. There was also a quote about English bagpipes being played.

Isle of Wight Early Music Memories

(I have lost my notes on this so it is entirely from memory. Any more information gratefully appreciated.)

At one time many of the churches on the island would have had a church band. They played for the church services and would also play for festivals, dances and other special occasions. I remember one being mentioned - I think it was Binstead. The band comprised fiddle, oboe, ocarina and serpent. It seems they often had a brass instrument as well such as a cornet or horn. I remember thinking that an ocarina seemed odd. The bass part was played by the serpent.

Many handwritten music books have been found belonging to church bands. The front contained the hymns and the back section contained the dances. Many dance tunes were popular such as Soldier's Joy, Enrico, Haste to the Wedding. There is the famous story of the band leader getting the book up the wrong way up and playing for the church service "Devil among the tailors". The band was quickly replaced by an organ! In fact most were disbanded and the balcony on which they played taken down in the early part of the 19th century. Luckily some of the church band music books have survived but I have not heard of a survivor on the Island.

There was also mention of the music played whilst the household of a Great House walked between various manor houses on the island. The reference I saw concerned, I think, Arreton Manor and the walk along the valley to Haseley Manor or Nunwell House. The interesting part was they danced in long lines to the sound of a fiddle and bagpipes. The bagpipes were presumably the English pipes which have now become popular again in various bands. It seemed they visited each other for a day out for food, dance, song, fun and laughter!

It seems in Georgian and Victorian times the various manor houses would have had music evenings and dances. These have been demonstrated in various films. Queen Victoria very much liked a wide variety of music from light classical to various parlour songs like "Just a Song at Twilight" through to more bawdy musical type songs. Is there an Osborne House Song Set? Most of the songs of this time would have been heard on the Island in various houses.

Michal Morey

(taken from various sources)

Michal Morey was a woodcutter who lived at Sullens, near Downend on the Isle of Wight. He was executed in Winchester and gibbeted on the Isle of Wight in 1737 for the murder of his orphaned grandson, James Dover, who was in the care of Morey and his wife Beth. It is said that, in order to destroy

evidence of Dover's murder, he burnt his cottage. The road is now known as "Burnthouse Lane" and the woods as "Burnthouse Woods".

Death of James Dover

James Dover of Morrison's Newport, aged 14, went missing shortly after coming into a small legacy and was last seen going to the woods with his grandfather. Michal Morey absconded for several days and a warrant was issued for his arrest. He was apprehended towards the end of July 1736 and held in Winchester awaiting trial.

Three months later, the dismembered and decomposed remains of James Dover were found in the woods. They were in two leather bags, together with a billhook and bloodied gloves. Identification was made from the victim's clothes.

Trial and execution

Morey was tried at Winchester Assize in March 1737. The evidence was circumstantial. Morey, being inarticulate and taciturn by nature, pleaded not guilty and presented a poor defence. He was sentenced to death and hanged an hour after the trial at Winchester public gallows. His body was then taken to the scene of his crime and hung in chains from a gibbet erected in his home parish of Arreton.

The gibbet was built at a cost of six pounds and five shillings by local wheelwright, John Phillips. It was positioned on a Bronze Age barrow (since known as Michal Morey's Mound, or Hump) near a crossroad at the end of Burnthouse Lane.

Legacy

The gibbet-post now forms a prominent roof beam, over 22 feet in length, in the original tap room of the nearby Hare and Hounds tavern, with the date 1737 carved on it. Beneath, in a glass box, is exhibited a skull said to have been unearthed in 1933 and formerly supposed to be that of Morey. Research has subsequently identified it as belonging to a Bronze Age woman who died in her late teens, as stated on an accompanying notice.

The following rhyme was popular with local children for many years and is displayed, along with contemporary accounts painted in black letters, at intervals around the Hare And Hounds.

Michal Morey is dead.

For chopping off his grandson's head.

He is hung on Arreton Down.

For rooks and ravens to peck down.

Smugglers Epitaph

All you that pass pray look and see
How soon my life was took from me
By those officers as you hear
They spilt my blood that was so dear
But God is good, is just and true
And will reward to each their due

Childrens Rhymes

Hitty-titty in-doors, Hitty-titty out; You touch Hitty-titty, And Hitty-titty will bite you.

Titty cum tawtay, The ducks in the water: Titty cum tawtay, The geese follow after.

IOW Nursery Rhyme

Mistress Mary, Quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With Silver Bells, And Cockle Shells,
Sing cuckolds all in a row.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And pretty maids all in a row.

A sailor went to sea, sea, sea
To see what he could see, see, see
But all that he could see, see, see
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea, sea, sea.

Skipping Rhymes

Down in the valley
Where the green grass grows,
There sat Janey
Sweet as a rose.
Along came Johnny
And kissed her on the cheek.
How many kisses
Did she get this week?

Birdie, Birdie in the Sky
Birdie, birdie in the sky,
Why'd ya do that in my eye?
Birdie, birdie in the sky,
Gee, I'm glad that cows don't fly.

Five little monkeys,
Jumping on the bed.
One fell off,
And bumped his head
Mama called the doctor,
And the doctor said:
"No more monkeys
jumping on the bed!"

Lizzie Borden took an axe
She gave her mother forty whacks,
After she saw what she had done,
She gave her father forty-one.
Lizzie Borden got away,
For her crime she did not pay.

'England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales. Inside, outside, turn around TAILS!'

Parlour Songs IOW

Throw Out the Life-line! (lyrics and music by the Rev. Edwin Ufford)
Annabelle Lee — A Victorian setting of Poe's poem (music by music by Henry Leslie)
Home, Sweet Home! (lyrics by John Howard Payne, music by Henry Rowley Bishop)
Woodman, Spare That Tree! (another performance)
Three Fishers Went Sailing (lyrics by by Charles Kingsley, music by John Hullah)
The Lost Chord (lyrics by Adelaide Anne Procter, music by Arthur Sullivan)
The Village Blacksmith (lyrics by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, music by Willoughby Hunter Weiss)
On the Road to Mandalay (lyrics by Rudyard Kipling, music by Oley Speaks)
Oh Mother! Take the Wheel Away (lyrics and music by Claribel)
The Old Arm Chair (lyrics by Eliza Cook, music by Henry Russell)
Come into the Garden, Maud (lyrics by Alfred Lord Tennyson, music by Michael Balfe)
The Volunteer Organist (lyrics by W. B. Glenroy [pseudonym of William Gray], music by Henry Lamb [pseudonym of Henry Spaulding])
Woodman, Spare That Tree! (lyrics by George Pope Morris, music by Henry Russell)
I Come from the Beautiful Rhine (lyrics by Charles Mackay, music by Frank Mori)
Anchored (lyrics by Samuel K. Cowan, music by Michael Watson)
Somewhere a Voice Is Calling (lyrics by E. Newton, music by Arthur F. Tate)
Tatters (lyrics and music by Gerald M. Lane)

Songs sung by the Peasantry in the Island

Abroad as I was Walking
The Maiden's Complaint
The banks of the sweet Primroses
The Spotted Cow
Cupid's Garden
The Gardener's Choice
Roger and Dolly
Richard of Taunton Dean
Cis and Harry
The Old Man Clothed in Leather
The banks of the Sweet Dundee
I'm in Haste
The Dark Eyed Sailor
The Sailor's Return
The Pretty Ploughboy
The Lost Sailor
The British man of War
Polly Oliver
The Rambling Sailor
The Mermaid
The Loss of the Ramilies
The Death of General Woolfe
Paul Jones, the Pirate
The Lowlands Low
The Honest Thresherman
The Jolly Wagonner
The Farmer's Boy
The Barley Mow Song
The Song of Sixpence

My Billy Boy
What is Your One Oh
Nicholas Wood
While Joan's Ale was New
Jolly Fellows
Dick Turpin, or Turpin Hero
The Jolly Butchers
The Carrion Crow
The Fox
Moss the Miller and his Mare
The Crockery Ware
The Britches
Wearing the Britches
The Bonny Bunch of Roses O

Yet To Check

Come Landlord
Dick Turpin (Turpin Hero)
A Christmas Carol (Isle of Wight) (For this Christmas Day)
The Dunkey's Egg
Lowlands Low
Michael Morey / To Portsmouth
Rambling Sailor
Sailor Boy
The Southern Farmer (Brighstone)
The Tortoiseshell Cat
Will the Weaver
Wreck of the Irex etc

IOW Manor House Parlour Set

Come into the Garden Maud
The Heart of Oak
Love's Old Sweet Song
Nancy Lee
The Ship I Love
Tom Bowling

About Dave and Anwyl

We arrived on the island in 1975. We had been involved with folk singing and dancing in London and Yorkshire. We were fortunate to meet many of the revival singers. The IOW folk scene was very vibrant and we ended up helping to run the Sloop Inn Folk Club. Some new dance teams/ folk clubs started. Modern songs about the IOW were popular. Every week we played in a bar, went dancing, led a Ceilidh band, helped organise the folk club, mended our house, had children and also worked! Amazing! All a bit fuzzy now.

As usual we nosed around for tunes, songs and dances traditional and otherwise. We were fortunate to meet many islanders who had been there for generations. They already sung many of the Long songs (Songs Sung by the Peasantry) and we adapted most of the lays/songs of Noyes/ Stone and others came to light. I notice now we started on the various legends as well. We had help from local vicars as well as the W.I.! We noted at the time there were few sea songs.

We sorted the words, as some of the dialect was too much for modern ears. The words gave the rhythm for the music which we had to create for some of them using mainly traditional themes. Some just popped straight out of our heads. We performed these at the Newtown Randy.

We suddenly left the island, a job taking us to North Wales. In the late 80s we got together with Clare, an islander who sang many of the songs. Clare was an island girl in her twenties when she sang them. She had an amazing memory for the words and helped us with the rich wonderful dialect. The songs sung "live" were a pleasure to listen to. She made them naturally very funny, sad, animated, she got the audience involved. The tapes do not really do her justice. I know she is alive, well, but does not sing and I am trying to contact her.

We used a Home Studio tape machine over a long weekend in Shropshire. My wife who was working with an Apple computer used the material as a project and laid out some of the songs. We sent them to the central Isle of Wight library. We sang many of them in a Shropshire folk club but we joined a blues group and the rest is history!

There is a third set of songs. I will try to sort them out along with some tunes and dances over the next months. We are busy here in France. We started a shanty group, played Irish music in a bar for years, play Breton music, help organise an Old Time/Bluegrass festival twice a year and play in a trio. Nothing stops!

Hope you find these songs useful and use them as you will. If any new versions get onto an mp3 I'd love to hear it!